

ANN ARBOR PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of November 1, 2016

**SUBJECT: South Maple Avalon Apartments Planned Project Site Plan
(1110 and 1132 South Maple Road)
Project No. SP16-094**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the South Maple Avalon Apartments Planned Project Site Plan with Modifications to conflicting land use buffer requirements of Chapter 63 (Landscaping and Screening Ordinance), subject to providing affordable housing for lower income households and minimum of 60% open space.

LOCATION

The site is located on the west side of South Maple Road, between West Liberty Street and Pauline Boulevard (Ward 5).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the planned project site plan, including modifications to the conflicting land use buffer strip width, be **approved** because the contemplated development complies with all applicable state, local and federal laws, ordinances, standards and regulations; the development limits the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land; and the development does not cause a public or private nuisance and does not have a detrimental effect on the public health, safety or welfare. The planned project modifications provide for affordable housing, increased open space and preservation of natural features over the minimum required. The modifications to Chapter 62 are justified.

DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONS

The petitioner is seeking approval to develop 70 affordable apartments in two, 3-story buildings on a 4.7-acre site to be zoned R4B (Multiple-Family Dwelling). Petitions to annex the site and zone it R4B were also submitted, were recommended for approval by the Planning Commission at its October 18, 2016 meeting and are awaiting City Council action.

The site is made up of two long, narrow parcels spanning between South Maple Road on the east and I-94 on the west. Each of the parcels contains a single-family dwelling and several accessory buildings, all of which will be demolished. The site is covered by trees, brush and vegetation. It does not meet the definition of a natural feature woodland but does have 23 landmark trees. Six of the landmark trees are proposed to be removed. A wetland is located on the western third of the site.

The proposed development is limited to the eastern two-thirds of the site. The proposed buildings are located on the southern half, parallel with the south property line, and a 105-space surface parking lot (of which 42 spaces, or 40%, will be deferred) is located on the north half. A single driveway will provide access to the parking lot.

COMPARISON CHART

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED/ PERMITTED	
Zoning	TWP	R4B (Multiple-Family Dwelling)	R4B (Multiple-Family Dwelling)	
Lot Area	4.7 ac (204,367 sq ft)	4.7 ac (204,367 sq ft)	21,780 sq ft MIN	
Density (Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit)	102,184 sq ft per unit (2 dwellings)	2,920 sq ft per unit (70 dwellings)	2,900 sq ft per unit (MIN) (70 dwellings MAX)	
Open Space	Not Applicable	62% (126,708 sq ft)	55% MIN (112,402 sq ft MIN)	
Active Open Space	Not Applicable	1,391 sq per unit	300 sq ft per unit MIN	
Setbacks	Front	30 ft [a]	40 ft	15 ft MIN – 40 ft MAX
	Side (N)	12 ft [a]	86 ft	12 ft plus 23 ft, 4 in = 35 ft, 4 in MIN [b], and 12 ft plus 20 ft, 5 in = 32 ft, 5 in MIN [b]
	Side (S)	20 ft [a]	12 ft [pp]	
	Rear	1000 ft [a]	603 ft	30 ft MIN
Height	20 ft [a]	35 ft	35 ft MAX	
Vehicle Parking	4 [a]	105 spaces (of which 42 deferred)	105 spaces MIN	
Bicycle Parking	Unknown	14 spaces (including 7 Class A and 7 Class C)	14 spaces MIN (7 Class A, 7 Class C)	

[a] Approximate measurement.

[b] An additional 1.5 inches of setback is required for each foot of building length greater than 50 feet. Proposed Building 1 is 236 feet in length, an additional 279 inches or 23 feet 4 inches of setback is required. Proposed Building 2 is 212 feet in length, an additional 244 inches or 20 feet 5 inches is required.

[pp] Planned Project Modifications requested to allow reduced south side setback to the minimum required distance without additional setback due to building length.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Pinelake Village Cooperative (Multiple-Family Residential)	R4B (Multiple-Family Dwelling)
EAST	Park Place Apartments (Multiple-Family Residential)	R4A (Multiple-Family Dwelling)
SOUTH	Single-Family Dwelling, Hansen Park, Grace Bible Church	Township PL (Public Land) R4B
WEST	Interstate Highway	

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission at their October 18, 2016 meeting recommended approval of the South Maple Avalon Apartments annexation and zoning petitions, companion petitions to the proposed planned project site plan. City Council action on the annexation petition is scheduled for November 1, 2016. Following City Council approval of a resolution to annex, the annexation petition will be forwarded to the State Boundary Commission for review. Once passed by the State Boundary Commission, the zoning petition and the planned project site plan petitions will be scheduled for City Council action.

Master Plan Recommendation – The site is located in the West planning area and has a site specific future land use recommendation:

[West Area, Site 18] “This six acre site is located on the west side of South Maple Road, between Pauline Boulevard and Liberty Street. There are four single-family homes fronting on Maple Road, leaving a long, narrow portion at the rear that could potentially be divided and developed. Multiple-family uses exist across Maple Road, and Hansen Park is immediately south of this site. I-94 is the western boundary, while the Pinelake Village Cooperative is to the north.

It is recommended that a high density, single-family subdivision be created. Single-family development at this location will serve to provide diversity in the area and offer additional housing options. A secondary recommendation would be the expansion of the Pinelake Village Cooperative housing development onto this site. Higher density multiple family uses of this nature are appropriate if affordable housing is being provided. This would serve as an additional opportunity to provide affordable housing in the neighborhood. The woodlands on the western portion of the site should be protected and appropriate buffering from I-94 should be included in the site design. The Parks and Recreation Department requests the provision of an access easement through the site to Hansen Park.”

MODIFICATIONS TO CHAPTER 62 LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING ANALYSIS

Flexibility in the application of the landscaping or screening requirements may be allowed if certain conditions are met, per Section 5:608(2) of Chapter 62, which include approval by Planning Commission or City Council and being associated with at least one of seven specific situations (Section 5:608(2)(c)(i) – (vii)). Petitioners must provide a statement of justification identifying which site conditions warrant the requested modification and how the modification meets the intent of the ordinance.

The petitioners have requested flexibility in applying the one component of the three-part conflicting land use buffers (CLUB) (Section 5:603) requirements. The CLUB strip must be at least 15 feet in width. The proposed strip width will vary from 13.9 to 26.9 feet, at some points less than the 15-foot minimum requirement. No flexibility is requested in the tree planting and fence components of the CLUB. These components will be provided as normally required.

As justification, the petitioner states “the site contains landmark trees, wetlands and is adjacent to the Hansen Nature are on the south side. To the north is the Pine Lake Village’s vehicular use area. The landscape modification is being requested along the north property line to minimize impacts to the natural features along the south property line and the wetlands on the west portion of the property.”

The complete application for modifications from Chapter 62 Landscaping and Screening Ordinance is attached.

PLANNED PROJECT STANDARDS AND ANALYSIS

The Planning Commission may recommend, and City Council may approve, modifications to the area, height and placement regulations of the Zoning Ordinance in the form of a planned project site plan, as set forth in Article V, Sections 5:68 to 5:72 of the Zoning Ordinance.

As set forth in Section 5:70 Standards for Approval, planned projects must:

- (1) meet the lot size requirement of their zoning district,
- (2) provide one or more of certain features,
- (3) not create hazardous traffic to adjacent properties,
- (4) be consistent with proper development,
- (5) provide required off-street parking and landscaping and screening,
- (6) met the density or floor area ratio and open space requirements of their zoning district, and
- (7) have only permitted uses of their zoning district.

The petitioner requests a modification to allow a decrease in the south setback requirement of 35 feet, 4 inches in total, due to Building 2 having more than 50 feet in length, to 12 feet, the normal minimum distance required when buildings are not over-length. The normal setback is provided in Section 5:33, the additional setback requirement is set forth in Section 5:62 of the Zoning Ordinance. (Note that the planned project application also includes a request to increase the maximum front setback. The proposed site plan has been revised and the proposed front setback meets the maximum requirement. Although the application has not been updated, the front setback modification has been withdrawn.)

As stated by the applicant in their petition, the request modifications “will allow for a more compact site by reducing the area of disturbance to construct several smaller buildings. The proposed buildings will provide affordable housing, preserve open space and minimize impacts to the natural features including landmark trees and wetlands on the site.”

Staff finds the requested planned project modifications meet the standards for approval provided in Section 5:70, and in particular, the proposed modifications will provide affordable housing for lower income households (Section 5:70(1)(b)(7)), open space in excess of the minimum requirement of the R4B district (Section 5:70(1)(b)(1)), and preservation of natural features that exceeds ordinance requirements (Section 5:70(1)(b)(3)). Any one of these three features is sufficient per Section 5:70(1)(b).

The complete planned project modification petition is attached.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The petitioner held a meeting on July 7, 2016. Over 1,000 invitations were sent and 7 people attended the meeting. The South Maple Avalon Apartments petitions for annexation, zoning and planned project site plan were submitted on August 26, 2016. The petitioner’s citizen participation report is attached.

STAFF COMMENTS

Sanitary Sewer – The local sewer system has sufficient capacity for the proposed development. The trunkline sewer system has constraints during wet weather events, therefore the development will need to comply with the Developer Offset-Mitigation Program.

Natural Resources – Some clarifications to the landscape plan calculations are requested. Also, some proposed species must be substituted for additional variety.

Engineering – Staff has identified items that must be addressed in detail on construction plans, as is typical for site plans. Total improvement charges due upon annexation are \$6,465.05 for storm sewer constructed in 1986 and sidewalk constructed in 1986.

Natural Areas and Parks – Natural Area Preservation and the Parks & Recreation department have expressed interest the western third of the site for parkland. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan suggests a contribution of 0.87 acres or \$43,200.00 based on the proposed 70 dwelling units. The petitioner is considering a parkland donation in keeping with the request of the Natural Area Preservation staff and exceeding the PROS Plan recommendation.

Planning – The Planning Commission at its October 18, 2016 meeting recommended approval of annexation and zoning petitions for this site. The annexation petition has been schedule for City Council action on November 21, 2016. It is hoped that the State Boundary Commission will complete their approval of the annexation, and the zoning and site plan petitions can be acted upon by City Council before April 1, 2017. The petitioner wishes to apply on that date for low income housing tax credits.

Staff will work with the petitioner on the necessary corrections to the site plans prior to scheduling the site plan for Council action.

Prepared by Alexis DiLeo
Reviewed by Brett Lenart
10/25/16

Attachments: Zoning Map
Aerial Photo
Site Plan (Sheets 1, 2, 4, 9 and 13)
Planned Project Petition
Landscape Modification Petition
Citizen Participation Report

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Parks & Recreation
Systems Planning
Project No. SP16-094